Chapter 54 x When I'm Mia and When I'm Mario

THAT REMINDS ME, LAST YEAR WHILE YOU WERE DATING KARASUMA, YOU WERE STILL DATING ME

SO HOW COME YOU WERE BACK WITH HIM AT THE START OF LAST YEAR?

YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW COME...
I REMEMBER IT REALLY WELL BECAUSE YOU EVEN BROUGHT HIM HOME AND MOM WAS MAKING A FUSS ABOUT IT.
IF HE KNEW, THEN HE WOULD PROBABLY HATE KARASUMA-KUN AND I DON'T WANT THAT
AND THEY NEVER SEEMED TO GET ALONG VERY WELL IN THE FIRST PLACE
WELL, IT'S BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT HIM TO TELL ANYONE ABOUT ME, AND SO AS THE PRICE FOR HIS SILENCE, I WAS FORCED TO GO OUT WITH HIM
BUT HE WAS STILL A GOOD PERSON IN THE END, SO I DON'T WANT TO CAUSE ANY PROBLEMS FOR HIM NOW
THAT MADE IT SO THAT I HAD TO DATE HIM AGAIN FOR A LITTLE WHILE
THERE WERE A LOT OF CIRCUM-STANCES AT THE TIME
THERE...

OH, OKAY

WILL HE REALLY BE SATISFIED WITH THAT KIND OF ROUNDABOUT NON-ANSWER--??
THIS IS KILLING ME UGH WHAT SHOULD I DO--?

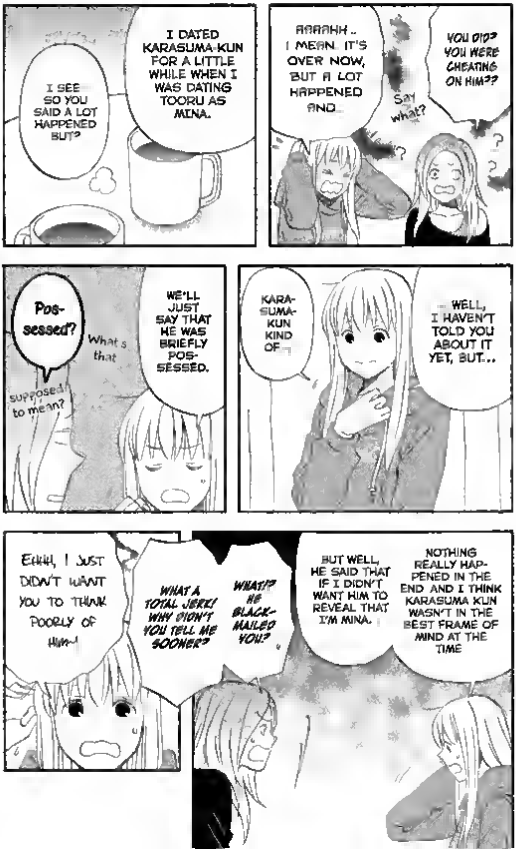
I MEAN, THE END OF THE YEAR TRIP WAS BASICALLY OUR GRADUATION TRIP
YEAH.
A TRIP??
FLOW

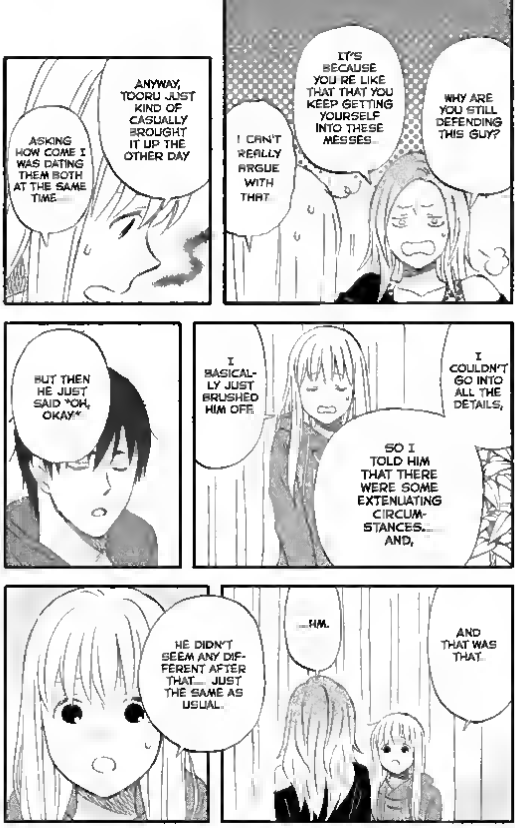
EH-
SO DID YOU WANT TO GO ON A TRIP SOMEWHERE?
THIS IS OFF-TOPIC, BUT THERE'S A LOT OF TIME LEFT UNTIL WE JOIN THE WORKFORCE.
'OH, OKAY'??? BUT WAIT..

WAAH~ THAT'S A GREAT IDEA TOORU-!
AND WE WON'T HAVE TIME TO JUST TAKE IT EASY LIKE THIS. WHAT DO YOU THINK?

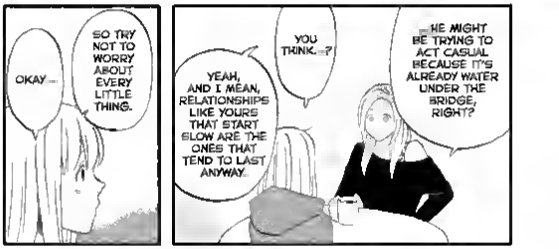
I FIGURE ONCE WE START WORKING WE'LL BE TOO BUSY,
BUT I KIND OF WANTED TO GO ON AN OVERNIGHT TRIP TO CELEBRATE MINA'S BIRTHDAY

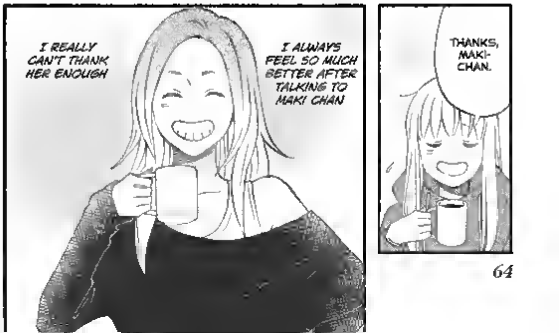
IS THE CONVERSATION ABOUT MY TWO-TIMING REALLY OVER?
IT'S A GREAT IDEA, BUT...
Is it okay if I make the arrangements?
Sure!
YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF YOUR LOVER FINDS OUT YOU WERE CHEATING ON THEM?
...UM.
AFTER YOU GUYS FINALLY CLEARED THE AIR ABOUT THE LYING AND HE FORGAVE YOU FOR EVERY THING,
HE ACTUALLY WENT AND CHEATED ON YOU WITH ANOTHER GIRL?
NO! YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG! IT'S NOT TOORU, I'M THE ONE WHO...
OH, I WAS JUST CURIOUS!
DID I MISS SOME-THING?
?
NO WAY...


I DATED KARASUMA-KUN FOR A LITTLE WHILE WHEN I WAS DATING TOORU AS MINA.
I SEE SO YOU SAID A LOT HAPPENED BUT?
AHHHH.. I MEAN IT'S OVER NOW, BUT A LOT HAPPENED AND...
YOU DID? YOU WERE CHEATING ON HIM??
SAY WHAT?
WE'LL JUST SAY THAT HE WAS BRIEFLY POSSESSED.
Possessed?
What's that supposed to mean?
KARASUMA-KUN KIND OF...
WELL, I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU ABOUT IT YET, BUT...
EHHH, I JUST DIDN'T WANT YOU TO THINK POORLY OF HIM-!
WHAT A TOTAL JERK! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME SOONER?
WHAT!? HE BLACKMAILED YOU?
BUT WELL, HE SAID THAT IF I DIDN'T WANT HIM TO REVEAL THAT I'M MINA.
NOTHING REALLY HAPPENED IN THE END AND I THINK KARASUMA KUN WASN'T IN THE BEST FRAME OF MIND AT THE TIME

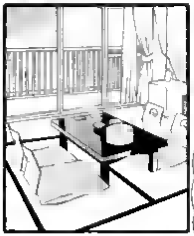

ANYWAY, TOORU JUST KIND OF CASUALLY BROUGHT IT UP THE OTHER DAY
ASKING HOW COME I WAS DATING THEM BOTH AT THE SAME TIME...
IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE LIKE THAT THAT YOU KEEP GETTING YOURSELF INTO THESE MESSES...
WHY ARE YOU STILL DEFENDING THIS GUY?
I CAN'T REALLY ARGUE WITH THAT.
BUT THEN HE JUST SAID "OH, OKAY."
I BASICALLY JUST BRUSHED HIM OFF.
I COULDN'T GO INTO ALL THE DETAILS,
SO I TOLD HIM THAT THERE WERE SOME EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES... AND,
HE DIDN'T SEEM ANY DIFFERENT AFTER THAT... JUST THE SAME AS USUAL.
...HM.
AND THAT WAS THAT.

BUT IF YOU FOUND OUT THAT YOUR GIRLFRIEND WAS CHEATING ON YOU, WOULDN'T YOU NORMALLY BE MORE UPSET...?
I COMPLETELY EXPECTED FOR HIM TO BLAME ME AND MAKE ME FEEL BAD ABOUT IT,
SO I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF HIS REACTION.

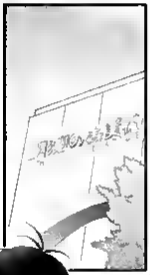

...HE MIGHT BE TRYING TO ACT CASUAL BECAUSE IT'S ALREADY WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE, RIGHT?
YOU THINK...?
YEAH, AND I MEAN, RELATIONSHIPS LIKE YOURS THAT START SLOW ARE THE ONES THAT TEND TO LAST ANYWAY.
SO TRY NOT TO WORRY ABOUT EVERY LITTLE THING.
OKAY...


I ALWAYS FEEL SO MUCH BETTER AFTER TALKING TO MAKI CHAN
I REALLY CAN'T THANK HER ENOUGH
THANKS, MAKI-CHAN.

Wahahha!
I THINK I'D TEXT HIM "GO TO HELL, YOU PIECE OF SHIT!" AND CUT HIM OUT OF MY LIFE COMPLETELY.
BUT YOU KNOW, GOING BACK TO WHAT I WOULD DO IF I FOUND OUT MY BOYFRIEND WAS CHEATING ON ME,
...
ANYWAY I'LL JUST ASSUME TOORU'S ACTING NORMAL BECAUSE HE WANTS TO PUT IT BEHIND US
AND THEN THE DAY OF THE TRIP ARRIVED.
WAHHHH IT FEELS LIKE IT'S BEEN FOREVER SINCE WE WENT TO HAKONE!
LIKE WHAT?
THIS TIME WE'LL BE STAYING FOR TWO NIGHTS, SO WE'LL GET TO TAKE OUR TIME AND SEE SOME OF THE STUFF WE DIDN'T GET TO SEE LAST TIME.
OF COURSE!
IS IT REALLY OKAY THAT WE'RE GOING TO HAKONE FOR OUR TRIP AGAIN?



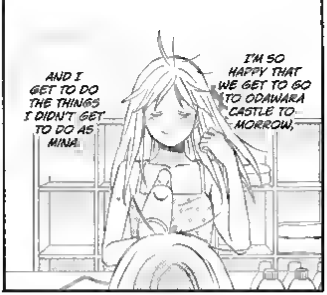
WELL, I WAS THINKING THAT YOU PROBABLY WANTED TO GO SEE ODAWARA CASTLE
I DO! IS IT OKAY WITH YOU?
YEAH, LET'S GO
YAY~!

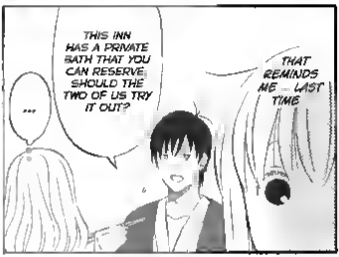


Okay
Let's save Odawara Castle for tomorrow and just revisit some of the places we liked today

IT'S KINDA THE SAME AND KINDA DIFFERENT COMING HERE AS MINA VERSUS COMING HERE AS MINATO
THEY'RE THE SAME PLACES WE WENT TO BEFORE, BUT IT'S A WEIRD FEELING

SIGN: MEN'S BATH (LEFT) WOMEN'S BATH (RIGHT)


I'M SO HAPPY THAT WE GET TO GO TO ODAWARA CASTLE TOMORROW.
AND I GET TO DO THE THINGS I DIDN'T GET TO DO AS MINA.


THIS INN HAS A PRIVATE BATH THAT YOU CAN RESERVE. SHOULD THE TWO OF US TRY IT OUT?
...
THAT REMINDS ME... LAST TIME

YEAH.
THIS IS DELI-CIOUS~
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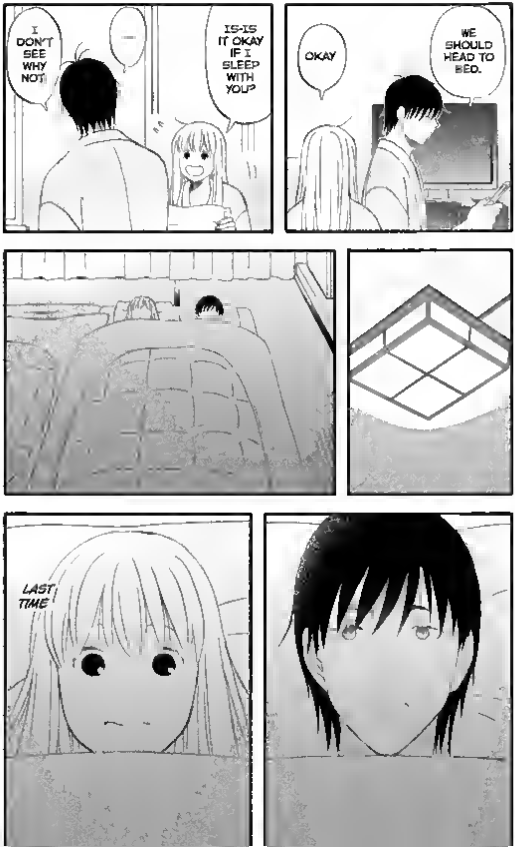
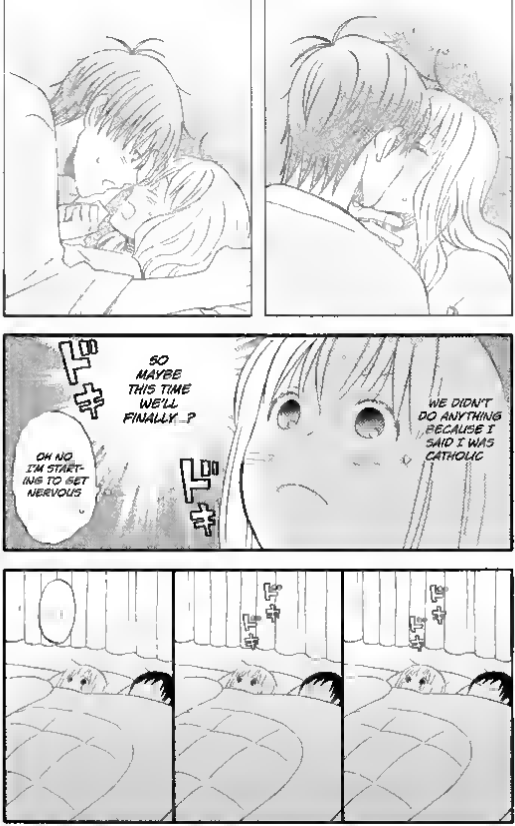
WHAT IS IT?
He was so cute back then
HEH HEH.
ズーン

YOU'RE NOT BEING SERIOUS ARE YOU?
...

ARE YOU BEING SERIOUS RIGHT NOW?
WHY ARE OUR POSITIONS FLIPPED?
...
SHOULD WE TRY RESERVING IT THIS TIME AROUND?
DO YOU REMEMBER HOW YOU SAID THERE WAS A PRIVATE BATH BEFORE?
YOU WERE ALL OVER ME WHEN I WAS MINA
I NEVER EVEN IMAGINED YOU'D TURN INTO A BLUSHING SCHOOLGIRL LIKE THIS.
WELL, IT'S NOT REALLY THE SAME NOW..
DIDN'T YOU WANT TO DO IT LAST TIME?
I HOPE THAT THIS TRIP BRINGS US A LITTLE CLOSER AND MAKES US A LITTLE MORE LIKE LOVERS...

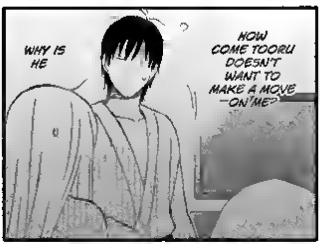

I DON'T SEE WHY NOT.
IS-IS IT OKAY IF I SLEEP WITH YOU?
OKAY
WE SHOULD HEAD TO BED.
LAST TIME


WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING BECAUSE I SAID I WAS CATHOLIC
SO MAYBE THIS TIME WE'LL FINALLY...?
OH NO, I'M STARTING TO GET NERVOUS

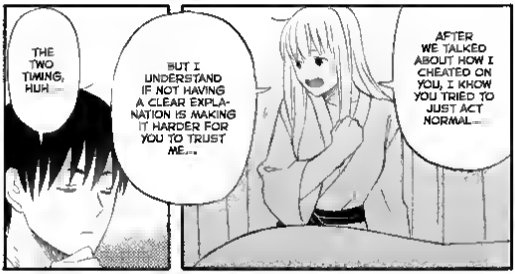
WHY DOES IT SOUND LIKE THERE'S AN ANGRY IRISH PERSON SHOUTING AT ME?
O!!!!!!!? TOORU!?
NOT GOOD AT THIS RATE, NOTHING'S GOING TO HAPPEN AGAIN!

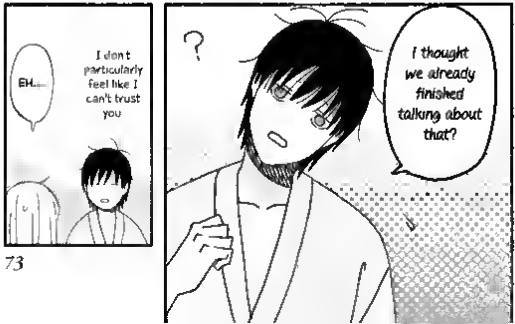
I'M NOT ASKING FOR MUCH... BUT C'MON... AT LEAST A LITTLE CUDDLING WOULD BE NICE...!!
SPENDING THE NIGHT TOGETHER IN THE SAME FUTON...
I MEAN, WE'RE IN A HOTEL? AT A HOT SPRING? JUST THE TWO OF US?
WHAT DOES IT MEAN IF NOTHING HAPPENS IN AN IDEAL SITUATION LIKE THIS??

I KNOW WHY...


WHY IS HE
HOW COME TOORU DOESN'T WANT TO MAKE A MOVE ON ME?

WHA...
THAT THING WITH KARASUMA-KUN IS STILL BOTHERING YOU, AM I RIGHT...?
SO YOU DO MIND...

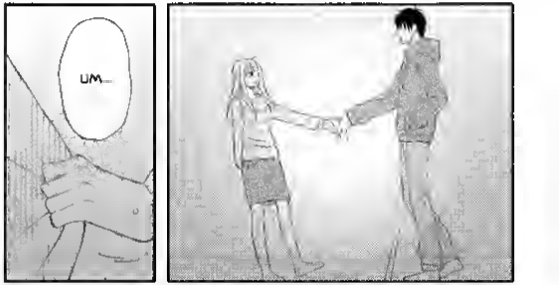

THE TWO TIMING, HUH...
BUT I UNDERSTAND IF NOT HAVING A CLEAR EXPLA-NATION IS MAKING IT HARDER FOR YOU TO TRUST ME...
AFTER WE TALKED ABOUT HOW I CHEATED ON YOU, I KNOW YOU TRIED TO JUST ACT NORMAL...


EH...
I don't particularly feel like I can't trust you
?
I thought we already finished talking about that?

SO I FIGURE THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME SORT OF SITUATION, RIGHT?
I MEAN, I KNOW THAT YOU WOULDN'T NORMALLY DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
YOU'RE OKAY WITH IT EVEN THOUGH I CAN'T GIVE YOU AN EXPLANATION??
HE'S SO PURE THAT I'M STARTING TO GET WORRIED.
I'M GOING TO BE A CORRUPTING INFLUENCE ON HIM AT THIS RATE.
CAN ANYONE POSSIBLY HAVE THIS MUCH BLIND FAITH IN A PERSON?
...CAN.
IS THAT WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT BEFORE...?
YEAH... JUST THINKING ABOUT HOW I NEED TO SET MYSELF ON THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.
ARE YOU OKAY?

BUT IF IT'S NOT BECAUSE OF KARASUMA-KUN THEN HOW COME HE DOESN'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING..?
SO HE'S JUST AS NERVOUS AS I AM
COULD IT BE BECAUSE HE'S NERVOUS?
...
WHEN HE WAS WITH MINA HE EAGERLY TOOK THE LEAD AND I HAD TO STRUGGLE TO KEEP UP
BUT NOW THAT HE'S DATING ME, WE'RE STARTING AT THE SAME LINE

IF WE'RE STARTING FROM THE SAME PLACE, THEN I NEED TO BE THE ONE THAT MOVES US FORWARD


UM...

IS IT OKAY IF YOU HOLD ME WHILE WE SLEEP?

...OKAY
...HEH.
HM?
I'M NERVOUS TOO
MY HEART'S POUNDING
TOORU...
BUT NOW I'M SO NERVOUS.
I DID ALL SORTS OF THINGS LIKE THIS WITH MINA.

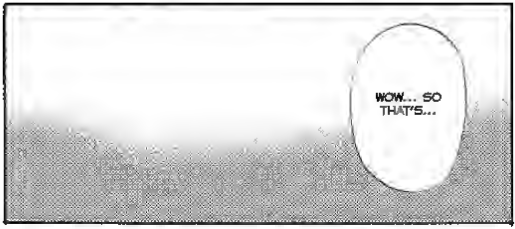
I NEVER DID ANYTHING LIKE THIS WITH KARA-SUMA-KUN EITHER
SO I'M TOTALLY NOT USED TO IT AT ALL..
YOU NEVER. LIKE NEVER NEVER?
YOU NEVER DID ANYTHING AT ALL WITH KARA SUMA?
UM... UH ...?
ふり
EH. .?
HUH?
I MEAN, WE HELD HANDS, BUT NOTHING PAST THAT .
YOU WERE GOING OUT, BUT YOU NEVER DID ANYTHING -.
UH Y-YEAH
ISN'T THAT PRETTY .
WELL .

WOW...
I JUST ASSUMED THAT YOU GUYS HAD DONE IT, SO...

ALL HIS EXPERIENCE AS A PLAYBOY IS FINALLY REVEALING ITSELF...!
BAD?

DOES IT MAKE ME LOOK BAD ?
I HAD NO IDEA THAT IT WOULD COME AS SUCH A SHOCK TO HIM THAT I NEVER DID ANYTHING WITH KARASUMA KUN

I'M PRETTY STUNNED RIGHT NOW
THAT BAD, HUH ..


WOW... SO THAT'S...

I GUESS THAT MEANS THAT I'LL BE YOUR FIRST FOR EVERY-THING.
IT'S KINDA...
EH
HERE WE SEE MINATO FEELING UNEASY ABOUT WHETHER THEY'LL EVER BE MORE COUPLE-LIKE AS SHE WATCHES THE BLOOD DRAIN FROM TOORU'S FACE.
Ehhhhh..
MAKING ME EVEN MORE NERVOUS...
So much pressure.